/127 cont./

776 with the ability or knowledge within the domain of the profane
[771] appears, then they consider it to be the working of kuei /128/
This gives rise to fear or hope, prayers or opposition. There is
*[782] only one method and that is to invoke the assistance of kuei
with supernatural powers and offer sacrifices to them.

Although the Miao do not differentiate between shen and kuei, they do believe that there is a difference between good and bad kuei. The good kuei live in the yin/supernatural/world
772 of heaven [ta˧ pia˨˩]. The earth, on which people live, is the
776 yang /mundane/ world. They do not have the theory of hell, but they believe that under the earth there lives a different kind of human beings. These people are as big as the little finger and live in houses plaited of mugwort and grass. A
774 human being has soul [pien˨˩] and a body [ko˧˩ ʔien˧/. When
[828] one dreams it is an excursion of the soul while the body is
[753] asleep. When a person is sick and cannot be cured by medicine, then it is said that his soul has been taken away by a kuei. When a person becomes unconscious, his body has been seized by a ku woman. When a man dies, his soul ascends to heaven,
775 and he comes to the realization of death only when he hears the
[961] crash of thunder or when a Miao sorcerer comes to search for
him. Those who suffer a sudden or violent death, such as from
[772] knife or spear wound, or from difficult childbirth, rolling into a gully, or falling into a pit, after death many become evil kuei. They are unable to go up to heaven; they are either immediately reborn into another state of existence and come back to life, or remain in the world to make trouble for people.
776 If a streak of black vapor is seen at night, they consider it the
821 manifestation of a kuei and people cry out, "[pe˧ ts'ə˧˥]"
[789] (meaning "drive away"), to expel them. The Miao for the most part believe that all natural phenomena have kuei as their controlling power. Hence the wind has a wind kuei [kuei˧ ʂo˨˩] and trees, tree kuei [kuei˧ ndu˨˩]. When there is a
[824] violent storm with wind, thunder, and rain, they must burn
* [782] beeswax in order to honor the kuei. What has been stated
[237] above are the native beliefs of the Miao. In recent years,

/143 cont./

*782 and the left and right forelegs to the "third- and fourth-leg-bearing" relatives. The breast portion goes to the sorcerer-priest.

In the morning of the third day, the sorcerer-priest once more performs his ritual in the main house. At the same time the guests are leaving. Besides the "leg-bearing" relatives, who each [574] receives a leg, the other friends and relatives all get portions of the beef from six liang to half a chin, sometimes as much as two chin, depending upon the degree of intimacy they have with the host.

(5) Redeeming the Soul

755 Should a person fall ill while at the market or any other *782 place through drinking well water or river water, the Miao con-774 sider this to be his losing his soul. Then they ask a sorcerer-priest to come to redeem the soul. In Miao this is called [lioꞌ [753] kueiꞌ], originally meaning "kuei of springs." The two kuei in-[776] voked are called [naꞌ ndi lioꞌ ui] and [naꞌ mei lioꞌ tei]. The time is in broad daylight, the place in front of the main entrance or any vacant ground. A table is set up on the ground, on which are laid five bowls of wine, five bowls of meat, three sticks of incense. The Miao sorcerer uses only a pair of chiao-tzu and utters an incantation which in general states:

> "Some time ago the host drank water at a well. Perhaps his soul was caught by the duke or the old lady of the well, with the result that he has become sick. There are pains in his hands and feet, making his movements up and down very difficult. Each time he sees a stone staircase, his heart flutters. Now we come with wine and meat to redeem his soul, with silver and gold to redeem his soul. Pray, release his soul quickly so that he can have an early recovery."

Although the Miao sorcerer holds the chiao-tzu in his hands he does not divine with them. After the incantation he burns the paper to send off the kuei.

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(6) Sacrifice to the Kuei of Pimples

When a Miao, whether a man or a woman, gets a pimple on his foot or leg which does not heal for a long time, it is considered that the [nəŋ⁴ ɳuei⁴ pi⁴nu⁴] and [nəŋ⁴ nu⁴ pi⁴ ʂɛ⁴] are causing it. Then it is necessary to ask a sorcerer-priest to sacrifice to the kuei during the daytime in the main house, with five bowls of wine and five bowls of meat, /144/ and three slender sticks of incense. In the Miao language this is called /paŋ⁴ pi⁴ nu⁴/. The sorcerer-priest holds the chiao-tzu in the right hand, and the words of the incantation he utters merely implores the kuei to bring about recovery.

In divination with chiao-tzu the yang chiao and yin chiao indicate misfortune; the sheng chiao indicates good fortune. If it turns up yang or yin chiao, it is necessary to repeat the incantation and divine again. As soon as the sheng chiao turns up, the paper can be burned to send away the kuei.

(7) Ta Kan Lo

Ta Kan Lo is called [ta⁴ ʂ'io⁴ t'a⁴ lie⁴] in the Miao language. When a Miao at home happens to have a rat urinate on him, or a hen suddenly crows or produces a soft-shelled egg; or when on going out he sees uphill two snakes together; or when walking a bird urinates on his head, these various phenomena encountered are all regarded as bad omens by the Miao. Then they ask for a diviner's calculation, without telling directly about the strange occurrence that has been witnessed. If what the diviner finds out corresponds with what one has seen, then the sorcerer-priest must be asked to perform Ta Kan Lo /Beating the Kan-Lo/. Each performance, not counting preparation, takes about half a day, from early morning till noon. The ceremony is divided into four parts as follows:

/160 cont./

*782 soil, the people have to sacrifice to this shen to seek protection for all the villagers. It is said that this shen[1] is very malignant [776] and can cause people to become sick, but when offered sacrifices [753] it can also bring quick recovery. [755]

Five cups of wine and four piles of money are placed on the ground before the shrine. Inside the shrine three sticks of incense are stuck in an incense burner as well as a pair of candles. Another stick of incense is stuck into the ground behind the priest. Also four strings of money are hung upside down on a slender bamboo pole which is placed crosswise in the shrine. The sorcerer-priest wears ordinary clothes and holds the ritual knife and chiao-tzu, first uttering an incantation [787] and divining with the chiao-tzu, then pouring the wine and stating the reasons. He also asks the shen to receive the sacrificial things, and then there is a recess. After this, he takes a small winnowing basket, in which are four piles of beef or pork and a bowl of salted pepper soup, and lays it down before the wine cups. The sorcerer-priest then utters an incantation, requesting the shen to come to enjoy the sacrifice. After the incantation the sorcerer-priest and the bystanders eat a little of the wine and meat. Then an additional four bowls of cooked rice, each with a pair of chopsticks stuck in, are offered up. The sorcerer again utters an incantation and [787] performs divination for every family in the village in turn. After this, he burns paper and sends off the shen, and all eat the wine and meat.

(3) Sacrifice to T'ien Wang

*782 In the Miao area, before the Hsiao-shu period /a solar period, about July 7-21/, the two days, chen and szu, are 784 days of prohibition when they sacrifice to T'ien Wang /Heaven [776] King"/, also known as the White Emperor T'ien Wang /i.e., White Emperor Heaven King/. On these days butchering and wine selling, fishing, hunting, mourning, or making merry

[1 i.e. Shen of the Flying Mountain Shrine - ANALYST]

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773 776 Yang Ming-lai. (1) Yen Ju-yü is of the opinion that the third

> 1. Among the Miao there is a story to the effect that Yang's three brothers were the sons of a little frog, who were poisoned afterwards. (See the chapter, "Folk Tales," 1) Myths, 13) The Little Frog /not translated/.

story is more credible. However, the Yang brothers were the generals of the Sung Dynasty who subdued the Miao, and could not have won such high respect from the Miao. The present writers are of the opinion that the second story is relatively more credible. According to the Kan-chou T'ing Chih: "It is said that the mother saint met a dragon shen at Lung-ching-pa, Ya-ch'i, and became pregnant, giving birth to three marquis, who were braver than any man, and became generals." This story is identical to the story of the Bamboo King. Yen thinks that this story cannot be true, because Yeh-lang is located near today's Shih-nan, far from Wu-ch'i. But he ignores the fact that the Miao now in the three sub-prefectures mostly came from Kweichow, and the Bamboo King having a long historical relation with the Miao can therefore inspire devotion and awe from them.

(4) Ma-yang Ta Wang

*782 776 [753] [731] [372] [82] When a Miao has a strange sickness or comes across a strange event, he offers sacrifices to this shen, for sickness is considered to be an outer manifestation of some impending disaster. If sacrifices are not offered, a greater calamity will occur. Sacrifices are also offered in the event of a fire or of a meteor in the sky. The Miao think that fire is caused by a meteor falling in pieces, and so then they sacrifice to this shen. If it falls intact on earth it becomes a coffin, and they sacrifice to Lu-pan (see later). Ma-yang Ta Wang is a wicked shen with

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2. Letting-Out-the-Ku Magic

754 /199/ Ku poisoning is very ancient. Ch'un-ch'iu Tso-chuan /Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals/, first year of Chao: "To put insects in a vessel to get a ku, in order to cause illness." It can be seen that more than 2,000 years ago the business of ku poisoning already was in existence. Cheng Ch'iao of the Sung dynasty in the section "Liu Shu Liao" of his T'ung-chih records the method of making ku, saying: "A hundred insects are put in a vessel and allowed to devour each other. The one left is the ku." It has always been against [671] the law to practice this. The old Criminal Code had an article [683] relating to "the manufacture of ku poison." But it is still secretly practiced today among the Miao. Volume 7 of Kan-chou t'ing-chih states: "Miao women can kill people by ku [776] witchcraft. It is called "letting out the grass kuei." They let them out when they are at odds with someone. If they are let go on the outside of the body, they eat up the five con- [824] stituents of the human frame /muscles, veins, flesh, bones, skin and hair/. When they are let out inside the body, they consume the five inward parts, or organs. The victim suffers [753] either agonizing pain, or becomes listless, or his skin will swell, or he will feel suffocated, all means of bringing him [787] to death. A month before his death the victim sees the soul of the person who set the ku on him coming from behind to give him something, which is called "the hastening medicine." If the sick person cannot be cured within a month he dies. It is said that either a man or a woman can learn this. It is necessary to set up an altar secretly, and to raise a few tiny shrimps in a small earthen jar filled with water. It should be buried in the earth beneath a bed in a dark room, or under a rock in an isolated path in a remote mountain. If this earthen jar is found by someone and burned, then the practitioner of this ku witchcraft will also die. When sending forth the ku one may use one, two, three, or four fingers. The poison from one or two fingers is relatively easy to overcome;

/200 cont./

754 of them must learn this art. But the secret is not necessarily
[428] handed down to one's own daughter — other girls may also be taught. If a girl is learning sewing or singing from a ku woman, and the latter thinks that she can be taught the art of ku, she inadvertently says to the girl, "You have got it!" This girl will then get sick. In order to get well, she has to learn the art from the woman. The details of the ritual and incantations used in imparting this knowledge could not be found out. The
[778] ku woman maintains a ku altar, hidden in the house or in a
173 mountain cave. It is said that once a certain ku woman main-
754 tained an altar at home. One day after breakfast when all the villagers had gone up the mountain to work, the woman shut her door and heated warm water to bathe the images. Inadvertently, a little boy saw her. The next day when the ku woman went up the mountain to work, the boy imitated her, heating water to wash the images, scalding the ku images to death. One of them bore the soul of the woman. While working on the mountain, the woman suddenly became conscious of what was happening. She went home to change her
754 clothes, then died. The eyes of a ku woman are red. If she does not send out the ku, she gets sick herself, and her face turns yellow. When the ku victimizes a person, the woman is protected from sickness for three years; when it victimizes an ox she is protected for one year; when it victimizes a tree, she
[829] is protected for three months. A pig may be victimized, but
[262] not a dog, and so the ku woman is afraid of dogs and does not eat dog meat. The symptoms of a victim of ku are yellow
[753] complexion, desire for food but inability to eat it, and a swollen stomach. Immediate medical attention can help re-
683 covery. In 1928 there was a case of ku poisoning at Feng-
754 huang, involving a Miao whose two sons died in succession. He suspected that a ku woman in the same village was the cause. The authorities were petitioned to search her house, where there was found hidden an earthen jar containing snakes, tortoises, toads, and so on, as well as cut-out paper images of human forms. The evidence was conclusive, and the ku woman was shot.

791 Miao-I center has one or two Kwei-shih, who learned their trade since childhood. Among the
[212] Chung-chia people the magic charms used for such spiritual purposes are marked with Chinese characters as phonetic symbols and written down as a scripture to be transmitted from master to disciple. The Kwei-shih, who are farmers by trade, take up mediumship as a side line to supplement their income from remunerations gained
• [753] from its practice. In case of sickness the
791 Miao-I believe the evil spirits are causing
462 trouble, and it is the duty of the Mi-la to chase them away in order to cure the sick person. Often she is invited to the house to do her work. Sometimes in public gatherings the Mi-la is surrounded by people inquiring from her as to the best method of driving away spirits. Evidently the Mi-la is less able than the Kwei-shih, for in case of very serious illness or in the performance of funeral rites the man medium is always preferred.

(2) Spirits of ailment. The Miao-I's belief in spirits is so strong that in case of ailment they neither think of a doctor nor of medicine, but of the Mi-la alone. She is generally an old woman, and on arriving at the house she is immediately possessed by the divinity she has invoked. The latter would reveal to her the identity of the evil spirit and devise /90/ the means to be extricated from it. There are many kinds of evil spirits, and the measures to ward them off also vary.

As a result of our investigation, we are able to list the names of the spirits and their antidotes:

776 1. The Family Spirit. The disembodied
755 spirit of a departed person of the same tribe, when met on the road, would give serious stomach-ache. The antidote is to take a bowl of rice filled with water, and twelve sheets of

the womb again. After this any child born is sure to grow into manhood. The decapitation and butchering have to be done before the child breathes his last. When the parents perceive that the illness of the child is identical to that of the other deceased children, /92/ they expect him to die, and taking advantage of his still being alive they cut off his head and legs. Otherwise, they believe, the prevention would not be effective. It is said that some ignorant Chinese in the same locality also follow this custom. 751/847

(10) Hair Preservation. When a child of the Miao-I is born the parents invariably ask a fortune-teller to outline his life's destiny. If his destiny is not good, then his hair is allowed to grow until he is six or twelve years old when he has his first haircut. The long unshaved hair is said to help preserve the life of the child. The first haircut is an occasion for great celebration: every household in the village would hang out red and green festoons and send greetings to the parents, who in turn would give a party, killing chicken and pig for a great feast. 787 852 856

(11) The Small Horse Image. If a child among the Ch'ing Miao cries all night without stop, the parents would attribute the cause of the trouble to the passing by of the "sky horse", a colloquial name for the locust. They would hang on the door a straw-wrapped bowl filled with rice and water, and little images of horses cut from the bark of a tree. This would stop the cry of the child. 755 753

(12) Throwing Water and Rice. When a Miao-I first becomes ill, the general assumption is that he has run into some starving ghost. The family immediately burns a bunch of unhusked rice and lights incense and candles in a bowl of rice immersed in water. This bowl is carried

755 outside the village, and its contents are strewn
753 on the ground. When the bowl is taken home and the sick person is not yet well, then a Mi-la is called in to drive away the hungry ghost by prayer.

789 (13) Drawing a Cat. Because of the destruction by rats in the house, the Miao-I often stick up a picture of a large cat on the wall to scare away the rats. They claim this device is very effective.

777 (14) The Auspicious Day. The Miao-I in the hsien district do not consult an almanac but consider as lucky any of the even days (2,4,6,8) in the lunar calendar as well as the ch'en and hsü days of the month. To ch'en belongs the dragon and to hsü, the dog, both of which do not have any taboo. So all the affairs of the Miao-I are conducted on either the even days or the dragon and dog days.

754 (15) Poisonous Insects and Medicines. It is said that in the Miao villages in An-shun certain women breed poisonous insects and certain men concoct medicines to harm people. Men and women who acquire these poisons - women by heredity and men through constant practice - are subject to frequent attacks themselves, ailing all over the body. So they have to eject their poisons to hurt others. Sometimes when they cannot harm human beings they can nevertheless damage woods and stones, for if their poisons are not ejected they themselves will be destroyed. This is a deep-rooted belief among the
754 Miao people. Each time an illness is prolonged
787 or becomes aggravated, the family suspects that the sick person has been affected by poisonous insects or medicines. In order to find out whether the sick person has acquired any poison, a test is made by placing at night a boiled egg on the breast of the sick person or beside his pillow. Next morning the egg is shelled and ex-

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

755 The Ch'uan Miao have no so-called doctors but there are some people who are supposed to know more about healing than others. They use mutton, pork, fish, the flesh of hawks or dogs, grasses, roots, bones of leopards, tigers and bears, and fossil bones and teeth. Neolithic stone axes, when found, are ground to powder and used as medicine. Fish is used to heal many diseases, pork to heal colds, dog meat to heal rheumatism, mutton to heal stomach trouble, and there is a kind of grass that is supposed to heal broken bones. This grass is wrapped around the broken limb which is bound up tightly until the bone has grown together. A few of these medicines have healing power, but others are positively harmful.

753 755 All diseases are supposed to be caused by demons. These creatures are the unhappy souls of human beings, animals and some inanimate things such as mountains and stones. The soul of a human being may become a demon if there are no descendants to provide for its needs or if the descendants are unfilial, do not show due reverence, and do not provide through offerings the necessary food, money, clothing, etc. Naturally the way to heal a disease is to get rid of the demon that is causing it and this is the work of the *tuan kung*. He knows how to find out what demon is causing the trouble and by means of charms, ceremonies and incantations he exorcises the demon and heals the disease. Of course he is paid for his services.

164 165 With such meager and inadequate provision for the healing of the sick it is not at all strange that the death-rate among the Ch'uan Miao is very high. A Ch'uan Miao friend told me that eleven children had been born to him and that only two were still living, both of whom were less than ten years old.[13] He said that he believed that many deaths were caused by the use of the wrong medicines. It is evident that if the birth-rate were not correspondingly high the Ch'uan Miao would gradually disappear. Malaria, typhoid, and tuberculosis probably cause more deaths than other diseases.

762 A great many Ch'uan Miao women commit suicide, and it seems almost fashionable for them to take their own lives. The reasons are: first, that the husband and the husband's parents mistreat the wife; second, that her husband is unfaithful; and third, that she is grieved because of the death of her children.

763 When a person dies, people are afraid as long as the corpse is in the house, because they believe that the soul of the dead person may do harm to the living.

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13. Since this was written, one of these two children and the father have died.

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

A tiger often changes into a good person. A woman who has changed into a tiger is called in Chinese a *lao pien p'o* 老變婆 or an old woman who changes. She looks like a dead person or is formless and invisible. Or she may look like a visible woman but when she thinks of being transformed into a demon she smiles and when she thinks of being transformed into a human being she weeps. She goes in front of a tiger to make a way for him and if a trap or a trap-gun is set to injure the tiger she removes it so the tiger will not be hurt. The first son of a family named T'ao, Wang or Chang can change easily into a tiger and the first daughter can change easily into a *lao pien p'o*. A fox can assume the form of a man and entice a woman to sexual intercourse. Afterwards the woman has pains and develops spots where the skin dries up. If she is not cured, she gradually dies and changes into a fox. A very large snake called in Chinese a *mang she* 蟒蛇 may transform itself into a man or a woman and entice a person to have sexual relations with him or her. The result is that the person pines away and dies unless a *tuan kung* 端公 can overcome the snake and save the person. The supposed snake may be killed and its liver given the patient to eat; this cures him. Imagination and suggestion probably have a great deal to do with such sicknesses and cures. Banana trees, vines, rats, frogs, and eels may also change into human form and entice a human being to sexual intercourse with the result that the person becomes ill and dies unless saved by the help of the *tuan kung*.

There are god-like beings that are believed in by the Ch'uan Miao but who are not formally worshipped. The greatest god is Ntsə. He controls the heaven and the earth but lives in the sky. The paradise to which the souls of the dead go, as we have seen, is the level land of Ntsə. A Miao told me that Ntsə is the very highest, the ultimate, and that he is everywhere, can be in the lowest place and is compassionate and most powerful.

Ntsə sometimes sends his daughter to succor poor and unfortunate men. This has been noted by Savina in his book on the Miao of Tongkin. Sometimes she becomes, at least temporarily, the man's wife.

Another name, Ntsə Njonŋ LʌU, means god, foundation, old. One can imagine easily that it means Ntsə the foundation of the universe. Some Ch'uan Miao identify Ntsə Njong LʌU with Ntsə but in the minds of others it is not very clear.

Another deity-like being is Yei SʌU or ɣ̊ei SʌU. He is very intelligent, never dies, is very kindly and merciful, is just, induces people to do good deeds and helps people who are in trouble, especially the poor. He is sometimes seen among the clouds and can easily make himself invisible.

10: Graham E-5 (1921-?) 1954 AE5 Miao AE5

engagement is made. There is generally no love between the bride and the groom unless it is after marriage. Love affairs, which are many, are often between a man and another man's wife or between a woman and another woman's husband. Sometimes lovers run away together, after which go-betweens endeavor to obtain the consent of the bride's parents, and the gift to her parents must be made as usual. Marriage by capture is not unknown. Strange to say, women rather like this method, for it shows that the man loves or esteems the woman, and it often results in a happy marriage.

There are no physicians, although some persons are reputed to know more about medicines and healing than others, and the efficacy of the medicines has not yet been scientifically investigated. The common belief is that all diseases and other calamities are caused by demons, which must be exorcised by the *do nun* or *tuan kung*, who is a magician or shaman. He has a formula for every disease, and besides using ceremonies and incantations to exorcise the demons that cause diseases or other calamities, he performs many real wonders, among which are treading with bare feet on a red-hot plowshare and touching his tongue to the same, spitting or spurting hot oil out of his mouth onto a fire to cause a larger blaze, and with bare feet walking over a ladder of sharp swords. It is not strange that the death rate among the Ch'uan Miao is very high.

The Ch'uan Miao theory of filial piety and of the relation of mutual helpfulness between the deceased ancestors and their descendants corresponds fairly closely to that of the Chinese. The deceased ancestors are believed to be in need of the same things that they need on this earth before death, such as food, clothing, houses, and money, and these are provided by the loyal descendants through the ceremonial offerings. In return the ancestors help and protect their descendants so that they may prosper.

Soon after death the *mo* or priest three times calls on the soul of the dead to return or arise, and when it does not do so he performs a ceremony to open the way of the soul of the deceased to Hades, or to paradise, which is called the ancient level land of Ntzī, the supreme but not the only god. The priest kills a rooster, and the soul of the rooster leads the soul of the dead person to paradise.

Some time after the *mo* has opened the way for the soul of the deceased to go to paradise, there is a procession. In front is a man whirling a stick. He is followed by two men playing the *liu sheng* and dancing, then two blowing water-buffalo horns, two carrying green bamboo twigs, and finally two men with guns. Inside the house a ceremonial drum is beaten. This ceremony is symbolic of the fact that in ancient times their ancestors lived in the forest where there were dangerous wild animals.

During the funeral ceremonies a bull or a male water buffalo is killed and partly cooked, and some or all of it is offered to the ancestors. Then the meat is thoroughly cooked and there is a feast. Friends and relatives enjoy the feast, but the descendants of the deceased do not then eat any of the meat.

Generally on the next night after the bull is killed a dance is performed by the strongest young men inside the house. It takes place in front of the ceremonial

[8 cont.]

755 to perform the ritual. Collusion between the two is common, and the ignorant people are made victims. These ghost affairs, however, often have a psychological effect and little ailments are sometimes healed this way. But in nine out of ten serious cases death is the only outcome. Their superstition is so deep-
● [753] rooted that they think all diseases are caused by spirits who have to be appeased. Death is considered a destiny, and the living resign
[761] themselves to fate. Every year when diseases are prevalent in all hsien areas in Kweichow, the diviners and the priests do a thriving trade that unfortunately causes innumerable deaths. What a pity!

6) Vices. Kweichow is an opium producing province. The
276 opium growers are the Miao-I, but they themselves detest this drug, and those among them who smoke opium are extremely rare. Even cigarette-smokers are few. But there is a kind of tobacco, locally produced, which is favored by all. When they are not at work, whether sitting down leisurely or walking in the street, they would smoke unceasingly the pipe tobacco. They
273 are fond of wine; men and women, old and young, derive pleasure from liquor and encourage each other to drink more, their breath reeking of alcohol. There are two kinds of spirits; a strong wine made from corn and mixed grains, and a white wine distilled from glutinous rice. The quality of both is mediocre and the taste ordinary, but they relish them with delight.

7) Recreation. The Miao-I in Kweichow are mostly farmers
517 who live apart in wild mountains and lone valleys under difficult and strenuous circumstances. They work so hard [9] that if they do not seek some kind of amusement, life would be entirely devoid of pleasure. So all groups of Miao-I emphasize recreations, which take place in between farming periods, such as the liu-sheng [six-pipe bamboo wind instrument] dance, the flower dance, market dance, moon dance, chasing the moon, sitting in the moon, singing, yao-ma-lang [or kan-piao, love-making], bull fight and horse racing. Among these the liu sheng dance,
[527] flower dance, market dance, bull fight and horse racing are held periodically in a fixed location according to precedents. The

[12 cont.] After the sacrifice they
796 sometimes carve a pair of wooden images and plant them at the
[532] entrance of their village for protection. (This is the same as the Chinese idea of building a temple for the earth god.) Every year a new pair is added to receive sacrifice. Apart from
[782] this they bludgeon the pigs and bulls to offer to ancestral spirits,
[776] and regard with great awe, all good and evil spirits, such as the
[769] Thunder God, Household God, and Earth God. To them even a
[778] big tree or a strange rock is endowed with divine power. The names of evil spirits are many. If a human being offends a
753 spirit he is liable to become sick, and the only remedy is to ask a kuei-shih or a mi-p'o to the village to perform all kinds of superstitious rites, known colloquially as "spirit affairs." Since
797 the reign of Kwang-hsu [1875-1907] in the Ch'ing Dynasty, foreign Protestant and Catholic missionaries had come to Kweichow to rent houses for dispensing medicine and preaching the gospel. The Miao-I people were attracted by their kind and dignified bearings and many were subsequently converted. These preachers bought property where their congregation was the largest and established schools with teachers instructing the people in the gospel. Today Shih-men-k'an at Wei-ning is the southwest headquarters of the Christian missions. There many Hua Miao become sincere believers [13] and followers. The
[212] missionaries have also introduced a romanized form of Miao language based on the English alphabet, which the Hua Miao learn as the "Miao language."

871 2) Education. The Miao-I in Kweichow have no written language, and therefore there is no education to speak of. In childhood a Miao learns leisurely at home from the adult the simple traditional ways of life. In adolescence he learns outside the home what his natural intellect is capable of, accumulating experiences days and months in an unconscious way without the aid of education. Their knowledge being thus limited, they can have no cultural progress and little improvement in the material things of life. Since the last years of the Ch'ing Dynasty those Miao who lived contiguous to the Chinese had asked the latter to establish schools in their midst. Although the number of Miao reading Chinese was on the increase, the whole system was

/157 cont./

771 114 Under these circumstances I deemed it especially important to investigate the religious element of the Meau with the utmost care. I shall deal with the activities of the Christian missions in a special section of the chapter on "Cultural Change and Colonial-Ethnological Problems among the Mountain Peoples in Thailand." Before dealing with the native religious elements of the Meau, I must point out that at first it was difficult to penetrate into the spiritual culture of the Meau. The Meau, to be sure, do not hesitate to perform their incantations and sacrifices in the presence of strangers, but they do maintain secrecy about certain things, especially concerning religion, before persons who do not belong to the community. Chance and some knowledge of medicine helped me probe more deeply into features of the sacral life of the Meau.

123 [753] [774] Lü, the third son of the chief Tsin Tsai, became sick. His father took heart and came to me, bemoaning the fate of his son. According to Meau opinion, his soul had gone wandering and was prevented from returning by evil spirits. The efforts of the shamans had been in vain. I was easily able to [164] determine that the sick Lü had tropical malaria, a fatal sickness for the Meau. I told the chief that many little evil spirits had entered his son's body and were sucking out the red blood. Under /158/ these circumstances it was not surprising that the soul did not dare to return to the body. He should once more ask the shaman to try his incantations, and I, too, would call on my spirits, firmly convinced that our combined efforts would be crowned with success. -- The shaman came and declared himself willing to undertake the experiment. After the ceremony, which I describe in detail in the section, "Magic, Soothsaying, and Interpretation of Omens" in this chapter, I treated the patient for malaria, which cured him of his affliction. Through this I won the sincere gratitude of the chief, and since I had declared that the shaman's assistance was absolutely necessary for the patient's recovery, he, too, was well disposed toward me. Hence everybody supported me in every conceivable way in my investigations, and I was able to penetrate more and more deeply into the spiritual culture of the Meau.

Akha A04
Miao AE5

/158 cont./

A M 771 The missionary Telford (1) calls the Akha "perhaps the most superstitious people in the state of Kengtung." According to our experience, the Akha, like all lower agriculturalists, have strong religious ties, but not nearly to the extent that the Meau have, in spite of the fact that the religion of the Akha, like that of the Meau, is definitely ancestor and spirit worship.

1. Page 98.

a) Ideas about Death and the Soul

M 761 776 The Meau regard sickness as well as the activity of evil spirits as causes of death. In their view, it may happen that in clearing land for a new rice field a tree in which a spirit dwells may be felled. Now the latter is angry at the human being who robbed him of his dwelling and kills him. Even if one should visit a spot in the forest which happens to shelter a spirit the latter regards this as a disturbance and seeks revenge on the intruder. It is therefore not surprising that a female shaman whose three sons had been the victims of an epidemic became convinced that she had built her house on a spot inhabited by an evil spirit who had taken revenge for it.

M 774 The Meau believe in an immortal soul, plī, which can have many shapes and leaves a sleeping human being in order to /159/ wander about invisibly. This causes dreams, for the experiences of the wandering soul become known to the sleeper in the dream. It generally returns to the body when the person awakens, but it may also happen that evil spirits hold the soul in captivity and prevent it from returning to the body. Then illness occurs, and if incantations are of no avail, death follows.

[753 776 764 755]

M 774 775 614 Every person has a soul. If a person dies, his soul is reborn in the next child of the family or the sib. Souls have no sex, for it does not matter what sex the next child of the sib is; even distinguished men may thus be reborn in the body of a girl. Accordingly, there is no judgement of good and evil human beings in the other world; the soul has nothing to expect other than that it will be reborn as soon as a new child of the

/159 cont./

774 sib comes into the world. It makes no difference whether the
775 person to whom the soul belonged was good or evil in his
614 previous lifetime.

In contrast to this, Lajonquière (1) reports: "Human beings have three souls,

1. II, p. 313.

ings have three souls, 'pli,' which arise again after twelve months when they enter the body of a pregnant woman. The souls of evil men are reborn in a frail child which is doomed to a miserable life and speedy death. Those of young unmarried girls haunt the paternal home, as do the souls of small children, which are reborn in the same family. All these conceptions, which are generally vague and sometimes contradictory, appear to us more like fortuitously discovered
[114] stories than native doctrine." Although Abadie (2) has borrowed

2. Page 169.

these statements, too, almost literally, they have not gained in probability, at least for the Thailand area. There is much more of an impression that both authors -- for whatever reasons -- did not probe deeply into the complex religious conceptions of the Meau. I was able to determine the following:

●753 According to the view of the Meau, a person becomes
774 sick when the soul does not return, but then, too, the soul leaves the body when a person becomes sick. One notices this by the fact that the person loses the zest for living and seems
775 to be absent-minded. When a person dies, /160/ the soul is always absent. It then returns to the dead body and takes up residence in it until it is buried. Then it leaves the dead body, but remains for three days in the vicinity of the grave. During this period it is given food which is placed on the grave by the survivors. Then it returns to the house and takes up permanent residence there until it is reborn. If the direct family dies out, the soul takes up residence in the house of the nearest blood relatives. When I asked what would happen if the

/160 cont./

775 sib died out, the informants repeatedly gave me the answer: "That does not happen." When I pointed to other peoples, it was said: "Well, we do not know what souls would do in such a case." They could not tell me any more about what happened to the souls of the insane or cretins, and similarly there was [828] no explanation for fainting.

769 When the Meau change their residence site, the souls of the dead leave the old house along with the migrants, after they 114 have been informed of the change of location through a special [775] ceremony. They then migrate with them and take up residence in the new dwelling of the family. Contrary to my findings, Lajonquière (1) reports that the souls stay in the old houses in

II, p. 319.

case of a change of residence: "A Meau who was asked by a missionary whether he worships his ancestors answered: 'Yes, they are there, and we do not take them with us!'" It seems to me that this is undoubtedly an error, for otherwise the confirmed ancestor worship and the cult associated with it among the Meau could not be explained. I do not think that there is a misconception on my part because my data are largely confirmed by various observations of other authors, and moreover a cult of the kind practiced by the Meau without the presence of ancestors could only be regarded as absurd.

753 If a soul does not find its way back to the body, it is 774 commonly assumed, as was said, that evil spirits prevent it from doing so, but it may also happen that it simply loses its way. That is, it is inquisitive and goes into the region of the clouds or into distant primeval forests among strange peoples and in doing so travels dangerous and devious paths. The owner of such a wandering soul /161/ grows weak and wastes [761] away; if one does not succeed in calling the soul back, the person dies.

775 The dead and their souls are not feared. The dead 761 body remains in the grave and decomposes; it can never return. If it should actually come back to life, this could only mean that there was a mistake and that the person had

/166 cont./

776 825 [372] [626] [171] The spirit of fire is called tă hŏ lŭ pín. It is his function to take care of the fire. He would feel offended if one were to step over a fire, and he would take revenge in such a case by sending a tiger that would devour the perpetrator. Telford (1)

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reports that the Meau and the Yau in western China, in the region of Tschieng /167/ Hung in Yunnan, believe in a bush spirit, Pe Tum Moi. Anyone who goes into the bush, especially to fetch water or firewood, has to be wary of him, because in the daytime this spirit changes into a frog, which, if it is put in a cage, disappears during the night. It is said that Pe Tum Moi commonly appears to human beings in the shape of a tiger that devours men and horses.

776 [844] I discovered a pair of spirits that appear only at the birth of a child. Corresponding to the fact that this pair only has a joint effect, it also has only a joint name: me yén.

[778] [756] The spirit sŭ kăn is able to increase money and property. Many Meau and all shamans erect a small altar for him in their houses. In addition to the helpful spirits already mentioned, there are a great many of them for the most varied spheres. What superhuman capacities these spirits have over and above the familiar activity, however, is unknown to the people. Individual spirits for individual persons are in any case in the minority, and there are no tutelary spirits that have to attend to a single person, so to speak.

● [753] Lajonquière (1) writes of "evil spirits that may enter the

II, p. 313.

human body in order to cause sickness. They live in the interior of the earth. They are the souls of the beheaded or of the unburied dead." In Thailand I was unable to find confirmation of this conception, which can probably be traced back to Chinese influence. I discovered in general that the Meau in Thailand

[177] [829]

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789 [753] Since there is an inclination to trace sicknesses back to the influence of evil spirits, all the means used against them are also used in the fight against sickness. As has been described in the chapter, "Life in the Community," section on "Naming and Admission into the Family Community," for protection against /189/ sickness, strings are tied around the children's wrists, and metal rings can also be used for this. The effectiveness of many amulets pertains at any given time to a certain spirit, but magical agents with a polyvalent effect, so to speak, are also made. Such magical agents are brewed out of the most effective substances known against certain individual spirits and therefore have a general effect. For instance, one takes the root [824] of a certain kind of mimosa and adds arrow poison, pandanus leaves, and the root of a certain plant cultivated for this purpose in the rice fields, but whose name I could not discover. Since each of these agents is in itself protection against certain spirits, the effect of the mixture, according to the conception of the Meau, is comprehensive.

[823] Besides such vegetable protective agents, copper plays a special role among the metals in the making of such agents, since magical properties are attributed to it. Objects made of this [301] metal, such as rings for the neck, arms, or legs, are supposed to protect one against evil spirits. It is therefore primarily the children who are provided with such magical ornaments by their worried parents.

[756] The shamans, too, usually make their amulets out of the substances named and sell them at a small price. The view is not, however, that spirits are conjured into such amulets, but only that these amulets are protection against evil spirits. There [776] is, for instance, no spirit of arrow poison, of mimosa, or of the other substances mentioned; they merely have a warding-off and thus protective effect. Savina (1), too, mentions the amulets [714]

1. II, p. 257.

and reports that in time of war some that are supposed to make warriors invulnerable are made.

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/230 cont./

A 515 Conditions among the Akha are somewhat more favorable, but likewise leave much to be desired. The personal cleanliness of the Akha, however, is unconditionally greater than that of the Meau. The people wash themselves regularly as soon as they A [356] are grown up; children are washed daily. The houses are always [296] swept clean, and the Akha seem to wash their clothing /231/ [364] more often than the Meau do. Otherwise what was found among the Meau applies. To be sure, hygienic conditions are somewhat 165 better, but they are still so deficient that a high mortality among [163] the children as a result of epidemics and sicknesses is unavoidable. Among the Akha, too, however, this mortality rate is offset by great fertility, so that the Akha, too, will certainly not be subject to a population decline.

A M 164 165 [751] [753] Prophylactic measures against illness are completely unknown to both the Meau and Akha, as is the nature of infectious diseases. Although I did not succeed in determining precisely the losses caused by epidemics, the consequences of such pestilences were easily ascertained. Merely the presence of sibless Meau, who had placed themselves as unfree under the protection of powerful large /extended/ families, showed this, as did the many widows, widowers, childless parents, and orphans. Whenever I inquired M 761 164 731 about the causes of death, it was said: "Died because of the vengeance of evil spirits." It often turned out, however, that these evil spirits had killed dozens of people at the same time. I learned that once the Meau built a village in a country at an altitude lower than is customary and infested with malaria. When subsequently a malaria epidemic broke out they believed that they had chosen as a dwelling site a place haunted by evil spirits and they moved their village.

A 164 731 I could not find any moving of a village because of the outbreak of an epidemic among the Akha. Southwest of the Doy Tung there was an Akha village whose inhabitants had almost all fallen victim to an epidemic; from the description it was probably cholera. The survivors, however, had not moved the village.

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/231 cont./

A M 164 114 According to the symptoms that became known to me, other epidemics can seemingly be traced back to diarrhea, typhoid fever, and dysentery.

Unfortunately, nothing has as yet been published on the susceptibility or resistance of the mountain peoples to the various diseases. To be sure, the Census of Burma (1), for example, gave

1. Vol. XI, Part I, p. 112.

some statistics on the various diseases, but most of the mountain peoples were undoubtedly able to avoid inclusion in the statistics /232/ -- at least a substantial part of them is in practice not included at all (see the chapter, "Statistical and Demographic Data and Differences between the Various Meau and Akha Tribes"). Furthermore, the Census of Burma confounds the natives of various races and cultures. I need only point out the example of the relatively strong resistance of the Schan /Shan/ peoples to malaria, or the catastrophic susceptibility of the mountain peoples, especially the Meau and Akha, to this disease, in order to show how useless the statistics of the Census are for this purpose.

A M 164 753 A 443 753 Both peoples are well aware of the fact that they contract malaria in the lowlands, even though the belief in spirits is drawn upon for an explanation, as is shown by the example of the Meau village that was moved because of malaria. Even the Akha who travel to Kengtung on market days in order to sell their wares never spend the night in the city, but on the heights of the surrounding mountains. Even if they have sold only part of their wares and a longer stay in the city would facilitate their business, they prefer to return to the city on the following day and to take the wearisome trip back and forth in the bargain. They explain this custom by saying that in Kengtung there are evil spirits who would send them fatal sicknesses during the night.

A M 164 Among the endemic illnesses occurring in the two mountain peoples there are plague, bubonic plague, typhoid fever, amoebic dysentery, bacillary dysentery, and various forms of worms, especially hookworm and trichinosis. One often sees

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/232 cont./

A M 164 pock-marked Meau. Abadie (1), too, noted the frequent occurrence

1. Page 159.

of smallpox: ...

M 164 731 744 "The Meau are frequently afflicted with smallpox, but they react wonderfully to the simplest medicines. In 1911, a severe epidemic raged in a very large village in the Tha-Long region and caused five to six deaths a day. All the inhabitants were inoculated on one day, the aged and the children, the healthy and the sick. From this moment on there was not another death." Such results are of course, highly gratifying, but it is /233/ somewhat disconcerting to see inoculation counted among the "simplest medicines"!

A M 164 732 As among most of the mountain peoples of Farther India, struma is common among the Meau and Akha, which Marabail (1)

1. Page 463.

confirms for the Meau, and likewise cretinism. These ailments are more frequent among the Meau than among the Akha. Moreover, in both tribes the women are more frequently and more severely ill than the men. Some of the cretins found in every M 164 732 Meau village do not seem to have been afflicted by true cretinism, but by epidemic meningitis and similar diseases. At any rate, the Meau told me on several occasions that these persons [753] had been quite normal as children, but had suddenly been stricken with fever and were then tortured terribly by evil spirits. Since that time their minds were affected.

A M 164 [158] Mental diseases and paralysis caused by nervous or rheumatic disorders are relatively frequent. I was unable to find syphilis; to be sure, it may have been spread among the Meau in some places by Chinese traders, but it has caused no obvious devastation. Gonorrhea occurs more frequently, but still rarely among the Meau, and it seems to be completely absent among the Akha, which can probably be traced back to the strict tribal endogamy among this people. I could find no

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/233 cont./

A M 164 cases. Frambesia occurs occasionally, cholera more frequently. The last epidemic known to me occurred among the Akha in 1933 and brought severe losses with it.

Furthermore all kinds of cold-sicknesses are common, including pneumonia; on the other hand, I could not find any tuberculosis. Lajonquière (2) also reports on the causes of these

2. II, p. 306.

cold-ailments, and Abadie (3) confirms his data:

3. Page 159.

"When the wind blows and on winter evenings sweeps in icy gusts through the poorly closed walls, when the damp air cools A M off to about zero, the whole family presses around the hearth, in which a few pieces of wood glow. All night long they sleep [513] in the ashes, one leaning against the other. This is the time when the aged and the very little ones catch their bad coughs, which follow them to their graves."

/234/ In keeping with the greater dirtiness of the Meau, head lice and body lice are considerably more numerous among them than among the Akha. The Meau also suffer from severe forms of scabies in connection with dermatitis. Caries are likewise common only among the Meau, as is pyorrhea, which I could not find among the Akha.

A M As I have already pointed out in the chapter, "Religion," the section on "Magic, Soothsaying, Interpretation of Omens," 753 776 some of the illnesses befalling them are traced back by the Akha as well as the Meau to the work of evil spirits. In such M cases, the Meau turn first to the ancestors for help, and, if they 755 cannot help, to the bisexual high Father-Mother spirit. Then [756] one attempts to drive out the evil spirits with the help of the [769] shaman, who often actually is skilled in medicine, even in our sense. The course of requesting the help of the ancestors and spirits is chosen only in case of sicknesses for which no remedies are known to the Meau, against which they are helpless, and which they regard as dangerous and incurable on the

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/234 cont./

M 755 [164] basis of their fine gift of observation, experience, and diagnostic talents. This attempted cure through conjuration is thus employed especially in the case of an outbreak of epidemics, such as the plague, and for malaria, amoebic dysentery, cretinism, mental diseases, and so forth. Such observations undoubtedly prompted Savina (1) to make the following remarks:

1. II, p. 259.

M [753] "The Meau regard all sicknesses as punishment from heaven or as an act of revenge on the part of evil spirits. In the first case, the shamans recite prayers in front of an altar. In the second case, they drive the spirits out of the patient and swing swords in doing so. Also, coins in the shape of a cross are sewed on the patient's clothes (on the back). Human figures made of cloth are sewed on the back or the stomach. Paper dolls are pasted on the walls and above the altar."

M 757 [754] [787] Aside from the shamans, some of whom are not unskilled in medicine, there are men among the Meau who fight illness with the help of their medicines. They sometimes also prescribe remedies, according to the results of questioning the oracle about it, but in such cases they let the spirits /235/ make the choice between such medicines which, according to their view, might be useful in the particular case of illness.

M [114] [177] Under these circumstances, the assertion by Dhuraratsadorn (1),

1.Page 172.

who advocates the view that the Meau usually use the medicaments of the Haw (Western Chinese) since they themselves have no knowledge of medicine, is undoubtedly inaccurate.

A 753 782 776 This is much more the case among the Akha, who are much more helpless against sickness than the Meau are. The Akha believe that all sickness is the work of evil spirits and try to protect themselves by means of offerings which are supposed to propitiate the spirits.